

University Campus Life and Activities aligned with Students' Preferences towards Designing Competency Model Framework

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Abstract

With the recognition of equity, diversity, and inclusion philosophy universities are keen to offer holistic and wider campus life to enrich student experience. Meanwhile, campus life and engagement in variety of activities contribute to develop ethos, skills and attributes appropriate for employability and interpersonal competencies. This is imparted through students' participation in social, cultural and sports activities, involvement in clubs and societies, nurturing passion and hobbies leading to physical and psychological wellbeing. Within this context, the research aims to examine students' preferences towards campus life, activities to acquire meaningful life skills and competencies. The study explores the perceptions and aspiration of the students at Gulf University, Bahrain about campus life, participation in activities supporting their skills and competencies for interpersonal and academic achievement. This research contemplates both quantitative and qualitative methodology. The quantitative part relies on questionnaire capturing the preferences for campus life and participation in wide range of activities towards developing teamwork, leadership, time management, pioneering initiative etc. Further, a qualitative methodology has been deployed to conduct focus group interview with students from different programs. The analysis of the questionnaire and focus group interview is utilized to design 4-5 years competencies framework cycle that supports university management to be responsive in preparing work ready graduates who are highly preferred by the employers for their interpersonal competencies such as reflecting distinguished character, passion to take responsibility, and leading initiatives towards profession, community and environment apart from discipline specific knowledge. The framework encapsulates the ongoing improvement in terms competencies identification supported by students' preferences, industry needs, futuristic studies; redesigning campus life and activities, assessing the impact and feedback to the next cycle.

Keywords: Student experience, social belongingness, Employability, Interpersonal skills, Community engagement